



**CalFed
EIS COMMENTS
September 14, 1999**

On behalf of the City of Tulare, I would like to address concerns that affect us.

1. Tulare, as is the case with most communities in the valley, has an agriculture-based economy. We are in an area with dairies that supply many of our major employers. We are in an area of high unemployment. If farmers - whatever they produce - were to lose the water supply necessary to prosper, the effect on every member of the community would be high. I agree with the Farm Bureau that is "a very real threat to this valley's water supply". A major source of export trade would disappear, and the already painful unemployment rate would escalate.
2. If the cost of irrigation water were to climb sufficient to force farmers to pump ground water lowering the water table - as was the case during the last drought - that also is unacceptable to us. Tulare's supply comes from 23 wells. We are conscientiously trying to conserve. But if wells would have to be drilled deeper, the costs to the city for tapping and pumping water would be staggering!
3. The proposal to buy and idle farmland, putting them out of production, is of concern because of the negative impact on every business that serves those farmers and their employees. Our already high unemployment rate will be driven higher. Loss of business has the potential to drive many of our businesses into bankruptcy, or, at the very least, to lay off employees producing an ever-widening ripple effect.

I urge you to please remember that our people, our economy, and much of the nation's food supply can very easily be placed at risk. Please use caution in the decisions you will make.

Thank you.

William R. Cooke
Mayor
City of Tulare